A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, March 4. 1712.

HE, who when he saw an Occasional Bill obtain'd against the *Dissenters*, flatter'd himself that the Designs of their Enemies would end there, either knew little of their said Enemies, or very little of the Circumstances of the *Dissenters*.

He that has had any Hand in giving up, and abandoning the *Dissenters* in the late publick Affairs, forsaking them under the specious Pretence of doing it for their Good, and flatter'd himself he thereby expos'd them to no more than was litterally express'd in that Bill, either look'd, or could see but a very little Way before him.

Whoever pleases to read the History of the Edict of *Nants*, and the sad Story of the Ruin of the *Protestant Interest* in *France*, will find, the Extirpation of the *Hugonots* was not the Work of a Day, or a Year, but of Years, *I might say of Ages*; and the subtle States-Men of those Times, finding War, Blood, and bare Persecution would not do it, took their Measures wisely, and Circumventing them gradually, Ruin'd them by piece-meal.

I must be Blind, who have distinctly Remark'd the Transactions of that Affair, if I did not see a most exact Connection of Measures and Circumstances, between the Prose-

Profecution and Deſtruction of that Innocent People in *France*, and the preſent Steps a Party among us take at this Time, to Ruin and Extirpate the *Diſſenters* among us; *and let me make a ſhort Eſſay at the Parallel*, make as light of it as you pleaſe, Gentlemen; and you that are *Diſſenters* now, be as eaſie as you think fit in your New Condition, I tell you, *and I do it with Concern*, your Ruin is as certainly in the Deſign, and will as certainly be the Event, *Heaven only interpoſing by Miracle, for nothing elſe can prevent it*, as ever the like was in that Caſe, I mean of the Proteſtants of *France*. Two Things the Hiſtory of that Time Remarks, were Antecedents to the Ruin of the *Proteſtant Intereſt* in *France*,

1. Diviſion, Animoſity, and all ſorts of Jealouſies among the Proteſtants themſelves, as may be ſeen in the Account of the Aſſembly, before, and at their Removing to *Saumur*.
2. Being Forſaken, Abandon'd and Betray'd of the Great Men, who before Eſpouſed and Defended them; ſuch as the Duke *de Sully*, the Mareſchal *de Buillon*, Monſieur *Lesdigniers*, and others, the *Junto* or *Whig-Lords* of thoſe Days, who had Faithfully ſerv'd the *Proteſtant Intereſt* for a long while, and on whom they had an entire dependance, but who gave them up afterwards to Form an Intereſt, and purſue their political Deſigns againſt one another.

The Melancholly Hiſtory of this, would be ſo like our preſent Time, that I cannot but recommend it to all People who have this Matter at Heart, *to look back upon it*.

Theſe Accidents having thus Weakened and Expos'd them, the next Thing was for their Enemies to fall upon them, by cunning, ſure, *but Gentle* degrees; and this they did, *firſt*, By declaring them incapable of Offices of Profit or Truſt throughout the Kingdom, juſt like our *Occaſional Bill*, and paſs'd almoſt in the ſame manner.

From this, they deſcended to Breaking all ſorts of Treaties, Pacifications, or UNIONS made with them, and this in the moſt Notorious Avow'd manner, as particularly in deſtroying the Conſtitution of the Principality of *Bearn*, taking away their Priviledges, *&c.* trying thereby to drive them to Arms that they might deſtroy them, under the Pretence of Rebellion, as at laſt they really did, *Nature being oblig'd to Rebel againſt Principle*.

The next Step was to take from them their Schools, and prevent the Education of their Children in the Principles of the *Proteſtant Religion*, by which means they brought in a few Years, the *Popiſh* Children to become the very Perſecutors of their own Fathers and Mothers: I recommend theſe Steps to our ſecure, quiet *Diſſenters* here, to lay up in their Hearts, againſt the Time that they may come to have more uſe for them, than they may think they have now.

Is this like what is before us, or is it not? Are the *Diſſenters* in a Condition like that of the *French Proteſtants*, or are they not? Examin it at your Leiſure.

Are we not divided among ourſelves, Jealous of thoſe that *ſerve, love*, and would *die for us*; fond of, and willing to reſt upon thoſe that Sacrifize and Abandon us? Is there any Love, any Concern, any Charity among us? Is not every Man Jealous of his Neighbour, afraid to ſtand by one another; without Union, without Unanimity, without Chriſtian Compaſſion, without Concern, for either yourſelves or the Church of God, whoſe Intereſt ought to be your Concern? *Is this the Caſe, Diſſenters, or not?* How eaſie under the Oppreſſion of this laſt Law? How unconcern'd for the Support of thoſe, that muſt now either Sin againſt Conſcience, or Starve and want Bread? *In ſhort*, Is the Spirit that is now to be ſeen among *the Diſſenters*, a Spirit that preſages their Deliverance, or that threatens their Deſtruction? —— Juſt ſuch was the Temper of the *Proteſtants of France*, for ſome Time before their final Extirpation, and by it, in a great Meaſure, they made

made their Destruction easie to their Enemies.

Again are the *Dissenters* forsaken and given up, of those on whom they rely'd, who, like the *Ægyptine Staff* spoken of in the Scripture, *that, on which whomsoever should lean, it should pierce him through his Hand* ——— Have pierc'd through and destroy'd them; had not the *Dissenters* stood hard and fast to these Men against all their Enemies, refus'd all Accommodations for them, rejected Offers and Capitulations, and perhaps Advantages? Had they not put themselves into their Protection? Were they not our Guardians, and we their Pupils, or Infants? Yet all is one! Has any Obligation held them? Any Assurances bound them? — NO, their Interest has broke through all the Bands of Honour, Conscience, Honesty and good Policy; and they have sold the *Dissenters* for a Groaning-Board, a Speaking-Trumpet, an Empty Tinkling Cymbal, or a long, tall piece of Sounding Brass; Wretched Condition of the *Dissenters!* in this, worse than the *Protestants of France*, and therefore probably hastening faster to their Ruin.

And now the Third Step comes on, *nay, is come on:* Depriving of all Offices, this is done *brevi Manu, the shortest Way*; and now they are entirely Disarm'd, ty'd Hand and Foot, as Queen *Elizabeth* said, *tanquam Oves*, &c. as the Sheep to the Slaughter; there wants nothing now, but the *Coup de Grace*, nothing but the Butcher to put them out of their Pain, and he is in the Confederacy with them that have betray'd this Cause.

The last Step above observ'd with the *French Protestants*, was taking away their Schools; I do not say the Bill now brought into Parliament, *To prevent the Foreign Education of Children*, aims at this ——— Time will discover; but has it not been the avowed Resolution of the Party a long Time, to pull down the *Dissenters* Schools and Academies? Now not to do this, all first a Law is made to prevent the Education of Children in Foreign parts, is so gross a piece of Policy, as none can be blind enough not to see through.

But what do these People pretend to? Do they think that *the Parliament* will prohibit the Education of our Children in Protestant Nations A road? —— As to *Popish Education*, let them do it and welcome; But do they think our Church afraid of all the *Protestant Churches* in the World? *It cannot be*— But suppose the horrid Suggestion should be true— What is next? Well, then we must send all our Children to *Scotland* to be taught, and will that mend the Matter? Nor can a *Parliament of Britain* prevent this by any other Rule, than by which they may confine me or my Children to this or that County, or City, or Town, or House, or Jail, without a Crime. But they tell us they shall soon make *Scotland* no Place for us, for they expect to have all in their Hands there quickly, in spite of our *Unalterable Union*.

Our *Dissenters* who bestirr'd themselves at the Revolution, have much to answer for to Posterity, that when they join'd with the Church to invite over the Prince of *Orange*, and Capitulated for a Toleration, they forgot that they had Children to follow them; never troubled their Heads with how they should be brought up, or how a Succession of Ministers might be kept up; but forgot entirely their Schools and Academies, leaving themselves wholly at the Mercy of those, who they had long Experience of having vowed their Destruction.

Unhappy Credulity! Supine Negligence! And now all the Schools of the *Dissenters* in *England*, either are, or soon shall be under Prosecution, and our Ignorant Children must Curse their Negligent Fathers, who made no Provision for them to be taught.

This is the very Thing the Party are now about, yet will not all this Allarm us, nor do we shew the least Concern, either for the Education of our Children at Home, or the Liberty of sending them Abroad?

Were our Eyes open, this should Engage us in some Concern for *Scotland*, whose Ruin is now upon the Anvil; and if Meo and Devils can hammer it out, shall be form'd with

with all speed —— The Union, which is the Hold we have taken of the Civil Power which *Scotland* had to help itself, and which ought therefore to be the Protection of their Eccleſiaſtick Liberties, is now to be made the Inſtrument of their Deſtruction, and to gripe them with the Iron Claws of a Conſtitution, to which they were very unwillingly join'd; and indeed upon no Suppoſition but upon the Unalterableneſs of the Conditions; which Word, Unalterable, is now become the Jeſt of the *Jacobite* Party, as may appear in a Printed Paper of Queries now Publiſh'd in *Edinburgh*, of which, the following is the fourth in Number, which I only name here, and ſhall anſwer hereafter.

Is not the Obſervator and the Review two Blockheads, who ſays that any Thing is Unalterable, becauſe the Law ſays it is Unalterable? Is there not a particular Act of Parliament in Scotland, which declares the Lineal Succeſſion of the Royal Family Unalterable? And is it not Treaſon to ſay, that that could not be Alter'd? certainly wherever there is a Sovereign Power, they not only can, but have Alter'd every thing, which many fooliſhly think is either Unalterable in its own Nature, but the Law has declar'd Unalterable, he is a Stranger to our Conſtitution, who can call any Thing Fundamental but the preſent Conſtitution.

This wiſe States-Man ſhall have his Quietus in our next.

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